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Italy

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WESTERN EUROPE

9. Segni Elected President of Italy

The prolonged and bitterly contested election of 71-year-old Antonio Segni--the Christian Democrats' official candidate--as President of the Republic by a narrow margin can be expected to increase existing strains between the right and left wings of the Christian Democratic party and between the Christian Democrats and their lay coalition partners.

Despite his participation as foreign minister in Premier Fanfani's present cabinet, Segni opposes this experiment in center-left, Socialist-backed government, and his election will be interpreted in many quarters as a repudiation of it. Right-wing Christian Democrats and the opposition parties--Liberals, Monarchists, neo-Fascists, and Communists--will be encouraged to attempt to sabotage the Fanfani government.

Fanfani may take over the Foreign Ministry, a post which he has held before, because he is anxious for Italy to play a more prominent role in world councils. Otherwise Saragat--leader of the Christian Democratic partners--who pushed Segni hard in the election, may be mollified either by appointment to the Foreign Ministry or the privilege of naming a man of his choice. ~~(CONFIDENTIAL)~~

Source: AP ROME, 7 May 62.~~SECRET~~